

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 03631 240411Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 FEA-01 AGRE-00 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 SS-15
STR-04 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01
/098 W

-----027046 240421Z /16

R 240100Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8373
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, EGEN, UNCTAD, SN
SUBJ: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: COMMODITIES - UNCTAD COMMON FUND
MEETING NOVEMBER 7 - DECEMBER 2

REF: STATE 191312

1. SUMMARY: GOS WILL NOT SEND ANYONE FROM SINGAPORE TO ATTEND
SUBJECT MEETINGS, ALTHOUGH IT MAY ASK OFFICIAL FROM ITS
GENEVA OFFICE TO ATTEND. ASEAN COUNTRIES MAY COORDINATE
THEIR POSITIONS PRIOR TO MEETINGS. SINGAPORE STANDS TO GAIN
LITTLE FROM COMMODITY AGREEMENTS AND IS SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL
ABOUT FEASIBILITY OF COMMON FUND. END SUMMARY.

2. INFORMATION IS KEYED TO LETTERS IN REFTEL'S PARA 3:
A. INSOFAR AS GOS TAKES FIRM POSITION ON COMMON FUND, IT
WILL BE DEVELOPED BY TRADE DEPARTMENT AND APPROVED BY
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ECONOMIC DIVISION OF MFA. RESPONSIBLE TRADE DEPARTMENT
OFFICIAL IS DEPUTY DIRECTOR TAN SONG SHUAN. DIRECTOR
OF MFA'S ECONOMIC DIVISION IS LEE CHIONG GIAM.
B. ACCORDING TO LEE CHIONG GIAM, GOS WILL NOT SEND
ANYONE FROM SINGAPORE TO UNCTAD MEETING ("WE HAVE TOO FEW PEOPLE
TO ATTEND ALL UN MEETINGS"), BUT MAY ASK ONE OF
TWO OFFICIALS IN ITS GENEVA OFFICE TO ATTEND. IF

SO, INSTRUCTIONS WOULD PROBABLY BE FAIRLY GENERAL AND WOULD INCLUDE REQUEST TO COORDINATE WITH OTHER ASEAN COUNTRY REPS. AS A RULE, SINGAPORE CHOOSES TO VOTE WITH ASEAN AND G-77 IF IMPORTANT NATIONAL INTERESTS DO NOT DICTATE TO CONTRARY. SINGAPORE DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN MARCH/APRIL UNCTAD MEETING ON COMMON FUND.

C. EMBASSY DOUBTS USEFULNESS OF VISIT BY U.S. EXPERT. SINGAPORE DOES NOT STAND TO GAIN ECONOMICALLY FROM COMMON FUND OR SEPARATE COMMODITY AGREEMENTS. AS A MAJOR MARKET FOR CERTAIN COMMODITIES - RUBBER, TIN, PALM OIL - IT BELIEVES IT PROFITS MOST FROM FREE MARKETS. LEE SAID THAT SINGAPORE GOES ALONG WITH COMMODITIES AGREEMENTS, EVEN THOUGH IT IS NOT A PRIMARY PRODUCER OR MAJOR CONSUMER, BECAUSE IT SYMPATHIZES WITH PRODUCER COUNTRIES WHO NEED TO STABILIZE THEIR COMMODITY EXPORT EARNINGS. (LEE HAD EARLIER TOLD EMBOFF THAT SINGAPORE IS "WILLING TO BLEED A LITTLE" FOR SAKE OF ASEAN AND LDC SOLIDARITY.) LEE WAS SKEPTICAL ABOUT WHETHER A COMMON FUND COULD BE MADE TO WORK AND SAID THAT GOS WOULD HAVE TO SEE A MUCH MORE DETAILED PROPOSAL THAN IT HAS THUS FAR BEFORE REACHING A FIRM POSITION. SINGAPORE IS ESPECIALLY CONCERNED THAT ANY COMMODITIES SYSTEM BE FIRMLY LINKED TO PRICES SET BY SUPPLY AND DEMAND.
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3. LEE SAID THAT ASEAN PARTNERS WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS COMMON FUND AT US-ASEAN CONSULTATIONS IN SEPTEMBER. HE ADDED THAT ASEAN COUNTRIES MAY SUBSEQUENTLY COORDINATE THEIR POSITIONS FOR THE UNCTAD NOVEMBER/DECEMBER MEETINGS, ALTHOUGH NO MEETINGS FOR THAT PURPOSE HAVE YET BEEN SCHEDULED.

4. COMMENT: EMBOFF'S IMPRESSION WAS THAT GOS HAS GIVEN LITTLE SERIOUS STUDY TO COMMON FUND, NO DOUBT PARTLY BECAUSE RECENT HIGH-LEVEL ASEAN MEETINGS HAVE KEPT GOS ECONOMIC OFFICIALS BUSY. EVEN IN CALMER PERIODS, HOWEVER, GOS MULTILATERAL FOCUS WILL BE ON ASEAN FIRST, WITH ATTENTION TO BROADER ORGANIZATIONS LIMITED TO ISSUES OF DIRECT AND IMMEDIATE IMPORTANCE TO GOS INTERESTS.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 24-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
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Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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